

Amendments to the Drawings:

The attached sheet of drawings includes changes to FIGS. 3, 4, and 7. These sheets, which include FIGS. 3, 4, and 7, replace the original sheets including FIGS. 3, 4, and 7. In these figures, previously omitted reference numerals are added.

Attachment: Replacement Sheets
Annotated Sheets Showing Changes

REMARKS

I. Status of Claims

Claims 2-9 and 11-18 are currently pending in this application. By this amendment, claims 1 and 10 are canceled without prejudice to and/or disclaimer of the subject matter therein. Claims 2-9, and 11-18 are amended.

Claims 2-9 and 11-18 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject.

Claims 3, 4, 10, 12 and 13 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Funatsu *et al* (US 2002/0168562 A1).

Claims 5-9 and 14-18 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as obvious over Funatsu in view of either Watkins *et al* (USP 5,108,849) or Cavalca *et al* (USP 5,686,199).

Claims 2 and 11 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Withdrawal of these rejections is respectfully requested in light of the foregoing amendments.

II. Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 2 and 11 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

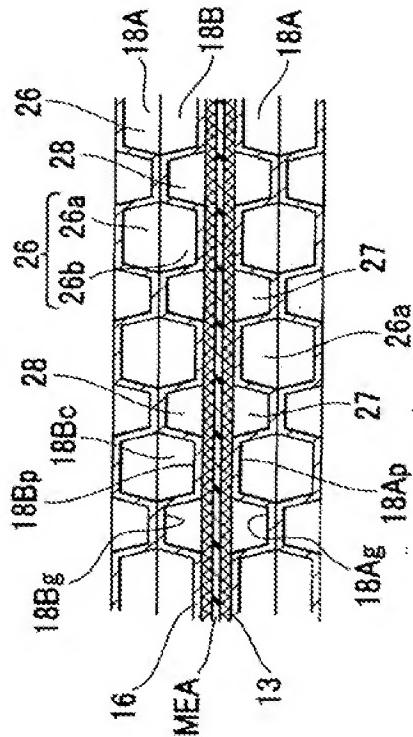
III. Drawings

The drawings are objected to as failing to comply with 37 CFR 1.84(p)(5) because they do not include reference signs as mentioned in the description. Withdrawal of these objections is respectfully requested in light of the attached Replacement Drawing Sheets for FIGS. 3, 4, and 7.

IV. 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, Rejections

Claims 2-9 and 11-18 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter. More specifically they were objected to for the use of the terms “concave groove” and “convex rib” in the claims.

FIG. 5



As seen in FIG. 5, reference numeral 18Ag, indicative of the concave groove, is curved away from the MEA. In contrast, reference numeral 18Ap, the convex rib, is curved towards the MEA. FIG. 5 is consistent with FIG. 4, where reference numeral 18Ag is also curved away from the MEA. Therefore, the Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and removal of the 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph rejection.

V. Pending Claims

Claims 3, 4, 10, 12 and 13 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Funatsu *et al* (US 2002/0168562 A1).

Claims 5-9 and 14-18 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as obvious over Funatsu in view of either Watkins *et al* (USP 5,108,849) or Cavalca *et al* (USP 5,686,199).

Although the Applicant respectfully traverses these rejections, to facilitate prosecution without waiving any argument, the undersigned submits that claims 2 and 11 are rewritten in independent form and now include all of the limitations of the base claims and any intervening claims.

Accordingly, claim 2 and 11, as well as their dependent claims, are allowable over the cited references.

VI. Conclusion

In light of the above discussion, Applicant respectfully submits that the present application is in all aspects in allowable condition, and earnestly solicits favorable reconsideration and early issuance of a Notice of Allowance.

The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at (202) 220-4420 to discuss any matter concerning this application. The Office is authorized to charge any fees related to this communication to Deposit Account No. 11-0600.

Respectfully submitted,

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APPENDIX

FIGS. 3, 4, & 7